



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

One Step Closer to a Brighter Future

Turbine Delivery a Multi-National Effort to Aid the Afghan People



Photo: USAID/Afghanistan

Kajaki Dam in Helmand province.



Photo: USAID/Afghanistan

Governor Mangal speaking to press at the dam.

"The American people are spending their money to bring prosperity for us; they brought the hydro power turbine for us to turn on the lights in our houses and Mosque."

Governor Mangal of Helmand

A convoy of 4,000 coalition troops spent one week fighting off insurgent attacks to clear the way for the delivery of a powerful new turbine to the Kajaki Dam in southern Afghanistan on September 2, 2008.

The new turbine, plus the refurbishing of a second turbine, should triple the reliable electric power output from 16.5 megawatts to 51 megawatts to Kajaki, Lashkar Gah, and Kandahar. Other work on the dam will provide water for homes, agriculture, and industry for the 1.5 million people in the Helmand River Valley, improving livelihoods and spurring economic growth.

The Kajaki Dam was first constructed by USAID during the 1950s and two turbines were installed in the 1970s. The delivery of this third turbine was the latest move by USAID to rejuvenate a major US assistance project to supply 6% of Afghanistan's electrical power.

Although the project itself is funded by the United States Government, the implementation would not have been possible without the assistance of Afghan National Security Forces and ISAF troops, including the UK, US, Canada, Denmark and Australia, providing security to the convoy.

Part of the national priority program in Afghanistan is aimed at providing electricity sufficient for residents, industries and commerce through harnessing the energy of water. Kajaki is one element of the overall plan to develop the Helmand Valley and a crucial part of the reconstruction efforts for Afghanistan.

Functioning electrical and water supplies will enable farmers to produce higher yields, will improve the services provided by community health facilities, and will provide children light by which to read and learn.